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食物安全中心：香港金鐘道六十六號金鐘道政府合署  
四十三及四十五樓  
Centre for Food Safety: 43/F & 45/F, Queensway Government Offices  
66 Queensway, Hong Kong

8 August 2012

Dear Doctor,

**Low iodine content in Wakodo 和光堂初生嬰兒奶粉  
and Morinaga 森永初生嬰兒奶粉**

You may be aware of the report released on 8 August 2012 that the above two infant formulae were found to contain a low level of iodine insufficient to meet the WHO daily nutrient intake requirement for infants aged 0 to 6 months old fed exclusively on these products. This is a result of the recent Centre for Food Safety (CFS) survey on the nutritional composition of 14 popular brands of infant formulae.

Iodine is an essential micronutrient for normal thyroid function, growth and development. Diet is the major source of iodine intake for humans. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended a daily intake of 90 $\mu$ g for infants from 0 to 59 months of age (corresponding to 15 $\mu$ g/kg/day for a child of 6 months with an average body weight of 6 kg). Sub-clinical hypothyroidism with the risk of brain damage might occur when the iodine intake is about one third of this value (i.e. 5 $\mu$ g/kg/day). In populations where the intake is less than one tenth of this value (i.e. 1.5 $\mu$ g/kg/day), endemic cretinism might be resulted.

This is an unprecedented incident in Hong Kong and its effects on our babies require further investigations. However, what is reassuring is that there has been no apparent increase in clinical cases of infant hypothyroidism diagnosed in hospitals under the Hospital Authority in the last few years. Furthermore, in a study of a group of preterm infants (gestational age ranged from 27 to 36 weeks) fed on formula milk with inadequate iodine content for a period of one to two months, although they had lower serum T3 and FT4 values and higher TSH and thyroglobulin levels than infants with higher iodine intakes, the values were all within normal range.

The affected products are being recalled and CFS will continue to conduct further product testing. Parents whose infants are taking the above mentioned formulae are advised to change to other brands with adequate iodine content. They may call the CFS hotline (3978 0600) for more information on product status and testing or Department of Health (DH) hotline (2125 1111) for health effects and management. For parents who are worried, the DH will operate 10 Designated Centres where they can make an appointment for their infants to have blood testing for thyroid functions.

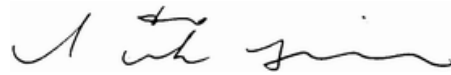
To ease public concern, may we appeal to your assistance in helping your clients in understanding the current position and to provide individualized advice for those who have used these products.

Attached please find a set of FAQ for your reference. More information is available at the CFS website ([www.cfs.gov.hk](http://www.cfs.gov.hk)) or DH website ([www.dh.gov.hk](http://www.dh.gov.hk)).

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Shirley LEUNG)  
for Director of Health



(Dr Y Y HO)  
for Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene